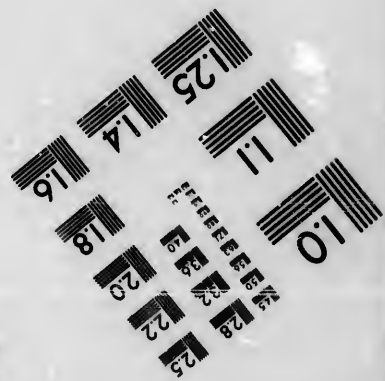
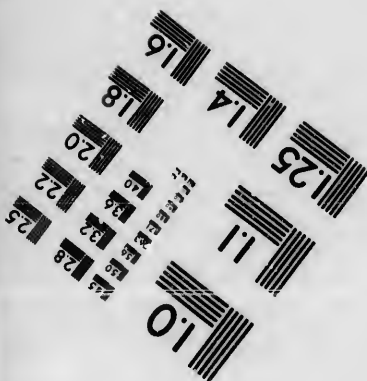
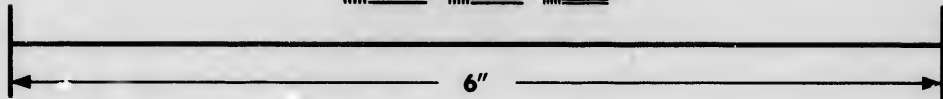
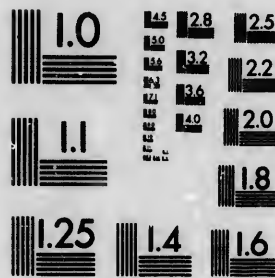


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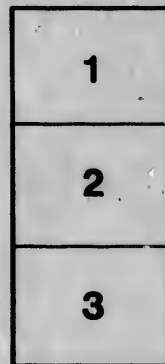
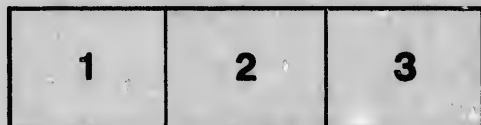
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SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE

SYNOD OF NOVA SCOTIA AND PRINCE
EDWARD ISLAND,

IN CONNECTION WITH THE

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,

On JUNE 26th, 1866.

BY

REV. GEORGE M. GRANT, A. M.

St. Matthew's, Halifax, N. S.

HALIFAX, N. S.

JAMES BOWES & SONS, PRINTERS, HOLLIS ST.

1866.

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S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE THE

SYNOD OF NOVA SCOTIA AND PRINCE
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Sermon.

WE ARE LABORERS TOGETHER WITH GOD.—1 Cor. iii. 9.

ALL work is honorable ; the more difficult the more honorable ; the higher the nature of that on which, and the aims with which we work, the more honorable ; the nobler the companionship the more honorable the work. Of his work in the ministry St. Paul specially speaks in this chapter ; and he strikes a higher key than David, who often cried, " God is my helper " ; for such language indicates a separation between God and man ; shows us man, weak, depressed, in danger, and the mighty God coming down to his rescue ; whereas St. Paul's words imply a perfect oneness between man and God, a sympathy and companionship in labor, a unity of aim and effort. And this thought was a living reality to the apostle ; seemed to be ever before him ; and was expressed by him again and again, both in his speaking and writing.*

I.—What is the work of God ? The large earth, seamed with rich ores, rock-ribbed and knit together, carpeted with soft grass and many flowers ; the luxuriance of summer and harvest ; ' the landscape winking through the heat ' ; ' the quiet tune of a hidden brook ' ; rolling prairies and vast depths of woodland ; billowy mountains stretching far to the horizon ; the wise ways, the unerring instincts of ant and bee, of bird and brute. That is the work of God. " He is the

* See Acts xiv. 27 ; xv., 4, 12 ; xxi. 19 ; II. Cor. vi. 1 ; Col. i. 29.

workman, whose servitor nature is."* The sea in its quiet beauty like a broad river of peace; or in its might when the strong ship was as nothing in its grasp, and the gleaming summits of its waves looked down on you in its trough, and men spake not a word to each other, having time only for instant endeavor; the other depth of the blue serene with all its worlds. That is the work of God. Yes—but can man co-work with God in such work of Creation and Providence? He can. When God made the world, he put man in it, to dress and keep it; to be its head and ruler, and representative. And this is our work still. God could make corn and fruits grow as spontaneously as brambles and thistles. He could have made the world partitioned from the first into lots and farms, redeemed from all barrenness and cumbrances, hedged and cleaned, so that man would have had no more to do than the beasts do,—wait till things grew, and then put forth his hand and take and eat. But He had sent him into the world not as into a play ground; but as into a school, that he might be educated into likeness to Himself; and therefore it was necessary that he should work at the same kind of work that God was working at; that through experience, habits of industry, and patience, of trust in God, gratitude, wisdom might be built up in him, and all his powers and capacities be developed to all their rightful issues. So when I see a man at honest work, honestly tugging at it; clearing land, redeeming a portion from the realm of disorder and chaos, and making it shine with beauty and use; cutting down stubborn trees, and shaping them into canoes or spars, into houses and furniture; hewing out rough ore and welding it into instruments that increase man's power, making good roads, good ditches, good work,—that man brown, brawny, horny-handed, rough in speech and appearance, I stand up

* Hooker Eccl. Pol. Lib. 1, Ch. iii. 4.

beside, and say "thou too my brother art co-working with God; thou art on the side of order and truth; a servant in the Great Master's world-garden, and delivering thy stroke faithfully in the little corner allotted to thee." While the sluggard, who is too lazy to work; the drone, who is satisfied to go on eating that which others have accumulated; the cheat and liar who appears to be working but is really shirking it, who would substitute sham and trickery for honest work—to that man whether in rags or fine linen, whether stout-limbed beggar, pick-pocket, gambler with dice, cards or stocks, adulterating trader, or quack minister to minds or bodies diseased, I say, "thou art co-working with the devil who was a liar and a cheat from the beginning. Get thee gone. Repent speedily, or verily, verily, thou shalt be lost body and soul for ever, driven from the presence of God and angels, and good and honest men for all eternity."

What is the work of God? Look abroad over the world of men. See how marvellously the bounds of their habitations have been ordered; how race suits climate; how food and clothing and local surroundings are related; how frame and complexion are adapted to soil and atmosphere; how all physical conditions tell upon social and mental. Trace the course of human progress; the history of nations; the actions and re-actions and balancings of contending forces; the struggles for liberty, for improvement, for happiness. See how evil has been overruled for good; how the selfishness of the individual has been made to advance the interests of others, and 'the solitary have been set in families;' how the lust of conquest has been used to scourge the unready, the riotous, and the demoralized; how despotism has been made the handmaid of art; how refinement, order, learning, and religion have grown partly in spite of, partly in virtue of bigotry, war, lawless force, and ill-gotten gain. Look at this strange result—that though every one says the world is ruled by selfish

forces, by material considerations, yet the spiritual realities of 'beauty, good and knowledge,' of truth, mercy and holiness, have increased and spread, and taken deep and deeper root until they are stronger now than ever they were, and their empire is acknowledged as legitimate and of 'right divine.' Or take this similar case. Look at any man that passes you in the street, and think of the possibilities that are in him; that there are in him passions fierce as ten thousand furies, all that could make him a Moloch, 'the strongest and the fiercest spirit that fought in heaven,' or a Belial 'false and hollow, to vice industrious,' yea, or a Beelzebub, insatiate to watch himself against the Almighty, with a towering selfishness that would cast the King of the Universe from His throne and seat self thereon, with a restless spirit ever fretting against its bars;—look at this awful being, more to be dreaded if uncaged than fell tiger or Libyan lion, and then think that millions of such beings are organized into a great and peaceful state, abounding in all healthful activities, in manifold industries, in complicated and beautiful organisms, in beneficent associations, in works of Godlike charity, in just-doing, in worship and reverence; peace and confidence within its borders in town and country, by day and night; and that all those jarring elements, those conflicting interests, those flaming passions are hushed or harmonized, so that the grand whole works on, smooth as a machine, resistless as the advance of the ocean or the decree of a king, and more lasting than the generation of men. That, that is the work of God.

Yes—but can man co-work with God in such structure of society? He can. God is indeed the father and head of every family and the King of nations. He setteth up one and putteth down another. Every plant that He hath not planted shall be rooted up and trampled under foot. But God sent man into this world of relationships and duties that by freely entering upon and discharging them, he might learn

tolerance and continence, leadership and obedience, justice and benevolence, —learn ‘the secret of the Lord.’ Therefore when I see a man honestly meeting the engagements and fulfilling the obligations of life ; providing for his household, educating his children, a priest having his own altar in his own house ; one who keepeth himself clean and sober, putting a bridle on temper and passion ; helpful unto and sympathizing with brother man and sister woman ; spanning with heaven’s rainbow of love all differences of clime, and color, and condition, of class, party, or sect ; when I see him reverent to superiors, law-abiding, and no busy-body ; and—that I may not omit the higher work to be done here—when he takes a positive stand at all hazards on the side of right and says ‘wrong shall not be done to any if voice or act on my part can prevent, misery and want shall not remain to curse my neighbors as long as I have or can do anything,’ then I go up to him and give him brotherliest greeting. ‘Thou too art on God’s side, on the side of purity and love, on the side of eternal justice and mercy. Thou art laboring together with God.’ While to the son who is false to a father’s pride or a mother’s love ; to the husband who spends on selfish indulgence what would make home happy ; to the eye servant ; to the disloyal citizen ; to the anarchic ; to the scheming, wire-pulling politician who would sell his oldest friend for the shadow of a piece of bread ; to him who defrauds his creditors of their dues or keeps back the wages of his laborers ; to the close-fisted iron-hearted rich man or woman, I say in the name of God, ‘thou art co-working with the devil, who was false, ungrateful, unjust, selfish, rebellious from the beginning. Get thee gone to thine own place.’

But, O fathers and brethren, we are now only coming to the heart of this subject. What is the great work of God ? Not to fashion worlds and to roll them into space ; not to guide the ongings of spheres and galaxies, of earth and sea ;

not to rule the seasons and the times ; not to preside over the bounty or barrenness of earth ; not to keep the tribes of men from self-destruction by the action and interaction of opposing forces. No, but work higher far, more difficult, more enduring. It is to bring dead souls to life, to the warm life of love ; to recreate them in His own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness ; to conform them to the image of His dear Son according to a predestined plan, that they like the firstborn may be well-pleasing before Him. Oh what a work is this ! Men are the objects of God's working. 'Ye are God's husbandry ; ye are God's building.' For this end He has established the Church, appointed the ministry, organized all the means of grace. Now do you ask, what is God's work ? I take you to the Church and show you Peter and John, timid as hares, very cowards one day, confronting high priest and rulers a few days after ; Paul travelling over strange lands to preach Him whom he had persecuted, and counting all things that men value, to be loss, for Him ; slaves returning to their masters, masters receiving instruction from their slaves ;—show you the noble army of the martyrs ; young children and tender women strong in Him ; dying men singing glory to God with dying breath ; missionaries leaving hearth and altar to associate with the stunted and the debased, and for His sake taking them into their hearts ;—show you the magnificent fabric of Christian civilization, with its community of moral sentiment underlying all political differences. Such is the work of God.

And you do not ask, can man co-operate in this, for you know that he can. God could do it all Himself ; could bring about an universal birth-morn for all humanity ; but He would train men to be holy as He is holy, by giving the very same work, even the highest of it, to them that He does Himself ; would teach them what holiness is, and the loathsome, damning nature of sin ; would teach them sacrifice,

crucifixion of self as the law of life. And it is just because ministers are specially set apart for this work on behalf of all that the words of our text specially refer to them.

II.—Ministers the especial agents in this work of the regeneration of men, did I say! Surely I am wrong—that is not their part in the present day. The minister's duty now is to give no offence to saint or sinner; to tread delicately lest he offend delicate sensibilities; to make much of the people, and by indirect flattery make them think well of themselves that they may think well of him; to be in a word an amiable, harmless creature, a dignified and respected wind bag, from which shall proceed at regulation intervals sounds that shall be accepted as thunder, thunder without lightning, thunder warranted to hurt nobody. The minister's work now is to crush his manhood out of him; to have no opinions that differ from those entertained by any one he meets, and to have no opinions at all on matters of real life; to strike at the vices of the absent, of other classes, other times; to echo the cuckoo note of a barren orthodoxy, to strain out the gnats of heresy, and to be suspicious of scientific criticism and free thought. No, in the name of the living God, a thousand times no. Ministers are—ought to be—"laborers together with God," stewards of his mysteries; not servants of the people, in the sense in which the word is commonly understood, that is hirelings doing so much work for so much wage. No, they are God's servants to serve men; responsible therefore not to men but to their Master; above their people in the Lord though serving them. "I magnify my office,"—not myself. In the ordinary work and relationships of life I am as one of my people, and would not dare to assume authority by clothing myself for common use with the sacredness of office. But as working with God I am an ambassador of Christ, and must speak as for Him whether men hear or whether they forbear. It is this that makes the office of the ministry a

sacred calling. Are not ambassadors held sacred everywhere? If this idea of the Christian ministry has gone quite out of date, so much the worse for this generation. But I believe that it has not. I believe that God always gives to the Church living examples of its reality. We had in our midst at our last Synodal meeting a meek, gentle, retiring man; simple and straightforward in speech and character, at whose feet we were all willing to sit. Eighteen years ago he was merely an obscure country pastor, one of those whom worldly-wise men sneer at as drones born to consume the fruits gathered by others, but doing no real work themselves. This man went to the far islands "at the gateways of the day;" landed among fierce naked cannibals; east in his lot with them; walked, unarmed, between opposing lines of them, exhorting to peace, while they surged and howled round him and longed each moment to elub him to the earth; lived for years alone; was doctor, lawyer, elergyman, architect, day-laborer, ship-captain by turns. And now go to Aneiteum and see John Geddie's work. In a stone church as large as this, 400 communicants sit down to commemorate the death of Jesus of Nazareth. They have schools in every district; a written language, a literature of their own, and a knowledge of that of the historic peoples; law and order, peace and decency, and all the well-ordered economy of Christian civilization. Was not that "laboring together with God?" Paris exhibitions can show to the world trophies of Australian gold and Nova Scotian coal, and the long triumph over nature stretchng many a mile through all arts and scienees and manufactures, but what exhibition can fitly represent such trophies of Christian enterprize! And to have such fruit of his labor ought to be the aim of every Christian minister. Here you cannot see the evidence so plainly writ; for the Church has already done much for Europe and America, and now even when real work is done in the region of the spiritual we

cannot estimate its exact amount, for many agencies are contributing to the general result that we see around us, and the special influence and value of one could only be known by its being entirely withdrawn, and by our having the world such as it would be were there no such agency. In those cases then of successful missionary effort where the contrast is presented by a speedy transition from one extreme to another, we can judge most truly. Here, a greater demand is made on our faith. We have to work and leave the issues to God.

Such is ministerial work in its essence, considered, that is, not merely as preaching but as a transaction in which God is realized to be the principal party and we merely His interpreters or mouthpieces, praying men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God. It is this solemn fact of ambassadorship that imposes such a weight on our spirits, and causes our work to be often the very opposite of 'pleasing the people' or yielding to their prejudices 'for the sake of peace.' It is in virtue of this that the gospel can be preached "not in word only but in demonstration of the Spirit and in power," and that it can thus show to the world 'an everlasting sign' of its divine origin. "Beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it."* Here is the great gulf between Christianity and all mere human systems, however much truth they may contain. For though fragments of truth were gathered from the works of all the sages of all quarters of the earth, and pieced together into a system of doctrines to be believed, that would be merely a philosophy. And philosophy can only be speculative; "that is, not merely unpractical but also sceptical," unable "to give a law or harmony to life."† The Nichomachean Ethics are in many respects admirable; the Confucian are

* Acts iv. 14.

† Jowett's Commentary, Vol. ii. page 401.

superior, in their development of the duties flowing from the relations of man to man; the Buddhist theology is more Christian than that of the Neo-Platonists. Being without the living centre and the consequent creative power of Christianity, what appreciable effect have they one and all had upon their disciples as individuals or upon the social or political life of humanity! Whereas Christianity is not so much a system of regularly developed dogmas and articles to be carefully spelled out, conned over, and intellectually apprehended by inquirers, but that which the Hebrew prophets called "the mighty power of God." The best systematic theology then that could be framed would be far from being a full expression of it. Only in the consciousness of Christ, for consciousness is vaster and truer than logic, is Christianity contained. Only in Him does all fulness for humanity dwell. And the noblest "apologia" for Christianity would be an exposition of how from this perennial 'manifold' perfection of Christ all the needs of humanity may ever be satisfied, and historically its or His conformity with the genuine products and laws of human nature as evolved by a sound psychology. In us life is fragmentary and contradictory; in Him, "the Son of man," the fountain-head and revealer of man it is full-orbed and the orbit is infinite; we realizing that we are His seed see a meaning in life, exult in the hope, that we shall yet be like Him, for we can say "we live, yet not we but Christ liveth in us," and the paradoxes of Christian experience which are mutually destructive according to the syllogism are to the believer the most absolute certainties. Thus is Christ the true King, the only King. "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth," He says; and our work is to get His kingdom established on earth, a kingdom of which the Jewish theocracy was a local and transitory type. This is the work of God. He in Christ is in all and through all, and by Him all things consist. By a covenant made from

everlasting with Christ He will bring many sons and daughters to glory. Therefore is the world governed as it is. Jesus Christ is the centre and complement of the world's history. Before His coming all things pointed towards Him. Of Him the entire Old Testament was "a great prophecy, a great type." He has come. And now all things look back to and rest upon Him; and we are His witnesses and co-workers.

III.—Enough has now been said, as far as a single sermon goes, on the work of God, and our position as Christian ministers Godward, and the sure ground of hope that we have in our laboring together with Him. And here, then, were I not addressing a Church Court I would bring this discourse to a conclusion. But it seems not unfitting that I should speak somewhat to you on the relationships between us that flow from our relationship to God, or on the legitimate basis on which men can co-operate as one organization to do the work of its Head.

And here a terrible spectacle is presented. We see not one Holy Catholic Church existing from the Ascension of Christ to the present day, and working together with one mind, but multitudinous sects, a many-coloured array of beliefs and superstitions, a valley full of the dry bones of dogmas and creeds, a colluvies of heresies and schisms; and were there not

"The penetrative eye which can perceive
In this blind world the guiding vein of hope,"

we would despair of unity of work and result being ever attained. The Greek, Romanist, and Protestant Churches are based on hopelessly irreconcilable theories. Confining our attention to the last named we find it disrupted into an extraordinary variety of sects holding substantially the same creed, yet in everything else wide as the poles asunder. In the West three hundred years ago, a grand confederation of national churches was the substitute proposed for the chrysalis unity

of medievalism ; but no plan was ever seriously tried, and the solvent of dissent has proved too powerful for the Reformation Churches ; and now in each and all of them men are asking "what shall we do—what shall the church of the future be?" Tradition, hypostatical authority and symbolical books have all been adopted as the basis of unity, and it would be difficult to say which of the three has failed least. Shall we then give up the hope of having the church an outward society, a definite vouching fact for the truth, opposed front to front to the world, and hold the ultra-Protestant position that the term "visible church" is erroneous,* seeing that the individual religious sentiment expresses the whole religious nature of man? To us this is not an argument but a *reductio ad absurdum*, for the very idea of the work that Christianity contemplates necessitates the formation of a society. And for constituting it, Christ has given a code of laws, an initiatory rite, a definite portion of time, an outward bond of union, positive aims, promises and penalties, not one of which conditions of society is local or perishable. And well that it is so ; for as it is only in humanity that man is understood, so it is only in society that he attains the perfection of his being. And this is true as regards the domestic and political ; or the moral and spiritual elements of his nature. How then is it that nations seem able to hold and act together, and solve similar problems to those which have proved so formidable to churches as institutions, and that the churches seem unable? How? because nations had faith in themselves, and the churches had not. Because the churches have been false to the very principles on which they were based,—the rights of the individual reason and conscience. "Where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church" said Ignatius. "Where the Spirit of God is, there is the church and all grace," said

* Alexander's Anglo-Catholicism, *passim*.

Irenaeus. "He that is good enough for Christ is good enough for me" said Robert Hall. The churches have not thought so. The founders of each gave it a Confession of Faith and directory of worship, which, like every good constitution and Christianity itself, had both an historical and philosophical basis. Did they mean to put that in place of the Word of God? No. Are we to accept that as determinate and final? That would be to dissever ourselves from both history and philosophy. For while the spiritual consciousness always seeks after a systematized form, all systematized truth tends to ossify and subsequently to die out of the consciousness. And* "that a form should express the wants and suit the condition of its times is essential to its perfection; but this condition changes, and no age is without its faults." Would we cast aside then the old symbolical books and make new ones? No. As in matters political we dislike 'constitution making.' We cannot dissever ourselves from history without incalculable loss. No amount of individual wisdom can give to a church or people that which its history alone can give. One generation cannot build a tower that shall reach up to heaven. But does our reverence for "the Church of our Fathers" require us to stifle free thought and be satisfied with forms of sound words? That is asking us to be traitors to our fathers, and unfaithful to the inspiration which God breathes into the souls of every generation of faithful men. Are we alone to have no freedom to criticize, to investigate in that domain in which 'our fathers' walked so freely, because they had faith that there was wisdom in God's word sufficient for all the wants of their age? Or are we to be insolently told that if on any point our opinions become modified, we may leave the Church? What does such ecclesiastical terrorism mean? 'The bribery and corruption' of the timid. The

* Hippolytus and his age, Vol. Introd. ii. p. 8.

offer of a premium on dulness, a premium on indolence, a premium on dishonesty. It says 'abandon thought all ye who enter here.' Its equivalent word in politics would be 'if any man thinks that the constitution or laws can be amended, let the ingrate renounce his citizenship.' That *would* be intolerable. It is equally intolerable when doctrinaires would rigorously apply it to the church. Of old the Pharisees cast out of the synagogue one whose eyes the Lord had opened, and Jesus met him and said "for judgment I am come into the world." Verily that church is 'judged,' is unchurched which is anxious to see true servants of the Lord go forth from it because they cannot pronounce perfectly all its shibboleths.

Yet what does the history of our own generation—to go no further back—teach us? Such men as Bushnell, Robertson of Brighton, holy John Campbell of Row, and Edward Irving, and I name these as representing the three great Protestant forms of government—Congregationalism, Episcopacy, and Presbyterianism—have been defamed, tabooed, cast out, when a generous interpretation of their earnest words would have yielded only the true faith of Christian men, or at the worst, a creed defective rather than erroneous. It was not denied, it was never doubted that they were 'laboring together with God.' The fruit of their labors proved that. But they poured their rich new wine not into the old but into new bottles, as their Lord had commanded. Better had they been more prudent, do you say? Better that they had never doubted, never inquired; had been satisfied with 'the traditions of the elders,' and never felt the consuming fire of new truth, truth that their age required. No, it was not better. It is still blessed to believe. Truly blessed are they on whom the Holy Spirit is poured out. Such men know that they are working with God, and as of old faith gives power to remove mountains. And are not there new mountains to be removed from the pathway of every generation,—new social problems, new phases of doubt, new combinations of the old antagonistic forces of evil? And dare the churches of to-day shut their eyes to their proper work, and waste their strength on nice points of millinery? What is the state of affairs in Great Britain? On the one hand, the great body of the

working classes is alienated from or utterly indifferent to the church. Not one working man in three ever enters a church door. On the other hand, the educated and thinking classes complain that the church offers them not fresh manna but old, dry-as-dust formulas instead of living truth, and so they sail out on the broad ocean of thought and leave the church stranded high and dry. And it is at such a time that in Scotland the men who realize the spirit and grapple with the necessities of the age are simply assailed by ferocious clamor or like to be ostracized by the churches they adorn. Inside the National Church there is indeed a comprehension of the signs of the times that inspires us with good hopes of the future. As to the great dissenting bodies, it is impossible to predict what stand they will take until they define their relationship to each other. In the meantime we see them not growing into one through oneness of spirit and work, and the power of Christian love; but each standing foursquare, suspicious and half astonished, while sagacious leaders seek by the use of rare finessing, diplomatizing, and protocolling for years, to persuade them into a "marriage de convenance." Of course I do not wish to commit this Synod to the view I have now taken of the state of affairs. I express my own sentiments. Neither do I commit myself to a decision on any of the doctrinal or ritualistic questions now being agitated in the Mother country. I contend only for that large liberty which should be allowed to every man in the Church who holds 'repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ;' for that reasonable latitude of individual opinion, and that congregational liberty that belongs to the very idea of a Protestant and a Presbyterian Church. It is too often forgotten that Presbyterianism as such is not, and should not be identified with modes of worship nor even with dogmas, but with government, it being opposed to the Papal, the Prelatic, and the Congregational, and able to appropriate the distinctive advantages of each. Without such liberty a Church such as our fathers conceived, a Church comprehending the men of thought and all classes and sympathies, a Church and Spiritual Parliament for the nation, is an utter impossibility. Co-operation in labour, and labouring together with God, rather than enforced agreement of opinion

on subjects that may be relegated to the domain of philosophy, politics or science; or than absolute conformity of outward form, seems to me the true and scriptural basis on which a Church should be built and compacted. Hence I regard the comprehensiveness of the Church of England as its chief excellence. It is often said that there is a great inconsistency in men of widely differing theological opinions belonging to the same Church. In the same way the Bible is inconsistent, and so is human nature.

Work! honest work for and with God in Christ! This is the Gospel that is preached unto us. No form new or old, no pet doctrine or panacea, no institution or catechism can take the place of that. We have seen in these modern times the mightiest in the Churches stumble and miss the purpose of their lives by not believing in the omnipotence of that. The heroic soul of Edward Irving clung to the last to the jargon of tongues, the delusions of the hysterical, and the collusions of the designing, as God's message to him and the hope for humanity. Henri Lacordaire—true and tender—nailed his colours to the white frock of the Dominican Monk, for to him that represented the highest style of Christianity. Dr. Pusey trusts to bring back "the ages of faith" by sisterhoods and retreats, and the re-union of Christendom by Eirenicons "discharged as from a catapult." The lives of such men, the representatives of High Church Presbytery, democratic Romanism, and thaumaturgic Episcopacy warn us where the true work of Christian Ministers lies; neither in forcing the devout spirit into extravagancies, nor in fettering it within the prison of effete forms; but in the free development in our own souls and in the congregation of all that is good, beautiful and true through living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. If God gives life, that life if not unduly interfered with, will grow into fitting forms, and unity will come at last, grand as the unity of nature.

"We then are workers together with him." "Wherefore we labour that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him." "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." That is the one thing indispensable in stewards. Amen.

